

40031
592 0031

REID

Implementation
of
Recreation Opportunity Guide

Pisgah Ranger District
Pisgah National Forest, R-8

Project approved for
fulfillment of Professional
Development for Outdoor Recreation
Management, Clemson University

James E. Reid
District Ranger
Pisgah Ranger District
Pisgah Forest, NC 28768

Background

Each year there are about 300,000 visits recorded at the 2 visitor centers on the Pisgah Ranger District. These National Forest visitors are seeking a wide range of outdoor experiences. To date a systematic method of assembling and presenting these opportunities to the visitor has not been utilized. In essence, there has not been a program designed to match the visitors desired experience with the available opportunity.

This area of Pisgah National Forest has long been known for the heavy developed site recreation visitation. Sliding Rock, Cradle of Forestry, 5 group camping areas and some 500 family camping and picnic units are most noteworthy of this area of the National Forest.

Last year, some 1,730,469 visits were recorded at developed sites within the Ranger District. This visitation represented about 1/2 million visitor days of recreation. However, all of the other types of recreation, the dispersed recreation, account for a much larger visitation and use. Last year approximately 3 million dispersed recreation visits were recorded. This dispersed use accounted for 3/4 million visitor days.

Dispersed recreation includes a broad range of activities, possibly several hundred. Unlike our developed site program we have no system of identifying specific dispersed recreation opportunities for the public.

With the growing demand for all types of National Forest recreation, there is a need for an orderly process to inform the public of these recreation opportunities.

Several Congressional Acts recently have addressed the need for providing and enhancing a broad spectrum of recreation opportunities to meet the needs of our nations people. Two of these, Resources Planning Act, 1974, and National Forest Management Act, 1976, are most explicit in providing a broad range of recreation opportunities.

User surveys have shown conclusively that people recreating can have and will have an enjoyable and satisfying recreation experience if their basic needs are satisfied. Our current program to match visitors experience needs with recreation opportunity is at best happenstance. Many of the frequently requested experience demands are matched quite well. However, because of the wide range of demands and opportunities, many visitors do not find the best opportunity for their specific need. A recent survey (Roggenbuck, 1979) of visitors in Shining Rock Wilderness Area seems to substantiate this. Dissatisfaction was expressed with litter, large groups encountered, lack of information and overall quality of management.

Project

Implement the Recreation Opportunity Guide System. The Recreation Opportunity Guide (ROG) is a system that inventories National Forest Recreation opportunities and presents the information to the public.

ROG is a management tool that will assist District and Forest personnel in properly utilizing the recreation resources of the District. ROG will increase the awareness and participation in dispersed outdoor recreation activities on National Forests and adjoining lands. The visitors lack of knowledge about existing opportunities is sometimes as great a deterrent to participation, as the unavailability of opportunities.

Some Attributes of ROG:

1. A systematic- orderly method of presenting to public, recreation opportunities- both National Forest and other.
2. Straightforward and easy to implement- can be used by field personnel.
3. Provides best knowledge and expertise of forest employees.
4. Relatively easy to revise and add to. Will serve as inventory for other projects and maps, etc.
5. Designed for implementation from ground up.
6. Ability to mesh with Outdoor Recreation Opportunity Spectrum System and Land Management Planning.
7. Makes possible for inexperienced and unfamiliar receptionist to have best available information.
8. Reduce visitor impact on district staff (practically eliminate need for receptionist to discuss daily visitor requests with staff.)
9. Opportunity for receptionist to monitor and update thru visitor feedback.
10. Will provide excellent training tool for all employees. Help to orient new employees and broaden regular employees outlook of recreation spectrum.
11. Meets Chief's requirement that all Districts have trail opportunities available for public.
12. Inexpensive- districts can implement now without additional funding.

Implementation has been relatively easy but does take time. The beauty of this system is that any portion/amount can be initiated. If a few minutes to a day or more of employee time is available, it can be converted into effective work on ROG.

The backbone of our ROG effort has been our trail system. During the past 2 years our YACC program effort has been directed toward improving our trail system. We have concurrently been involved in inventoring the entire trail system. Consequently, several YACC employees and leaders have developed excellent knowledge of our trail system. These employees have provided a large block of needed information for completion of ROG trail portion.

Nearly all of the actual write-up of ROG sheets has been done by volunteers and YACC employees who have worked as receptionists. These people have experience dealing with the public and know what is needed. All of the employees who have participated in this project could see the need and future benefits of ROG. A district landscape architect has also worked on the projects, and has been most helpful in development of quality material for ROG.

Summary

Providing information about recreation opportunities is one of the most effective actions open to managers. Effective dispersed recreation management must begin at the time the visitor seeks information about opportunities. Allowing prospective visitors to choose the recreation opportunity, that seems to best meet their particular need, will assure high satisfaction among users.

References

- Brown, P. J., Driver, B. J., McConnell, C., 1978. The Opportunity Spectrum Concept and Behavioral Information in Outdoor Recreation Resource Supply Inventories: Background and Application
- Driver, B. L., Brown, P. J., 1978. The Opportunity Spectrum Concept and Behavioral Information in Outdoor Recreation Resource Supply Inventories: A Rationale
- Clark, R. N., Stankey, G. H., 1979. The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum. A Framework For Recreation Planning, and Management, and Research. Unedited Draft. p. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 18, 19, 20, 36, 42, 43, 44
- Recreation Opportunity Guide Manual, Forest Service, U.S.D.A. 1978
- Tilden, Freeman, 9th Printing, 1977. Interpreting Our Heritage, p. 11-17
- Roggenbuck, J. W., Trimm, W. N., Watson, A. E., 1979. Visitor Preception Of The Recreation Carrying Capacity Of Three Wilderness Areas In North Carolina.
- Driver, B. L., Potential Contributions of Psychology to Recreation Resource Management. p. 238, 239, 240, 241
- Heberlein, Thomas A. Density, Crowding, and Satisfaction: Sociological Studies For Determining Carrying Capacity
- Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 9/19/79. National Forest System Land and Resource Management Planning, 36 CFR Part 219. Federal Register.
- Hendricks, Steve, 1979. Recreation Resource Analysis. Computer Technology Project, National Forest in North Carolina

Hiking



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

TRAIL BEGINNING(3516 feet, 1055 meters)
Bennett Gap on Avery Creek Road, FS #477

TRAIL END(3516 feet, 1055 meters)
Same as Beginning

ACCESS

From Pisgah Ranger Station, proceed north on US 276 for approximately 9 miles to FS Road #477. Turn right there and go approximately 2.2 miles to Bennett Gap Trailhead Parking.

ATTRACTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

From Bennett Gap one should proceed north up towards Buckwheat Knob. On top of the Knob there are some good views in the wintertime. The trail then descends into Club Gap. At Club Gap you can cross under a power line to a major intersection. Go right here (south) on the Avery Creek Trail. This trail descends its entire length following an old roadbed. The Avery Creek section of the trail is an excellent "streamside" trail with camping spots along it. Return to Bennett Gap northwest for 2 miles via Avery Creek Road.

NARRATIVE

The Buckwheat Knob/ Avery Creek loop offers a good change in elevation with views from Buckwheat Knob and the pleasure of hiking alongside Avery Creek. A two mile return section of the loop is alongside Avery Creek Road (FS Road #477). This is a gravel two lane road with relatively light vehicle use.

BUCKWHEAT KNOB/AVERY CREEK TRAIL

Length: 6.7 mi. (10.7km.)

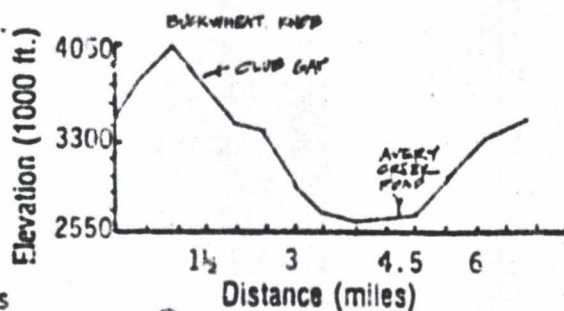
Recommended season:

| Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
|--------|--------|------|--------|
| ← | | | → |

Use: Medium

Difficulty: Moderate

USGS Map(s): Shining Rock



Jogging



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

COURSE BEGINNING AND END

Davidson River Ampitheatre Parking Area

DAVIDSON RIVER CAMPGROUND

Length: 3 mi. (4.8 km.)

ACCESS

Enter Davidson River Campground off US 276 just below Pisgah Ranger Station. Pass through the entrance stations, go about 300 feet to the parking area on the left.

Recommended season:

| Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
|--------|--------|------|--------|
| ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

Use:

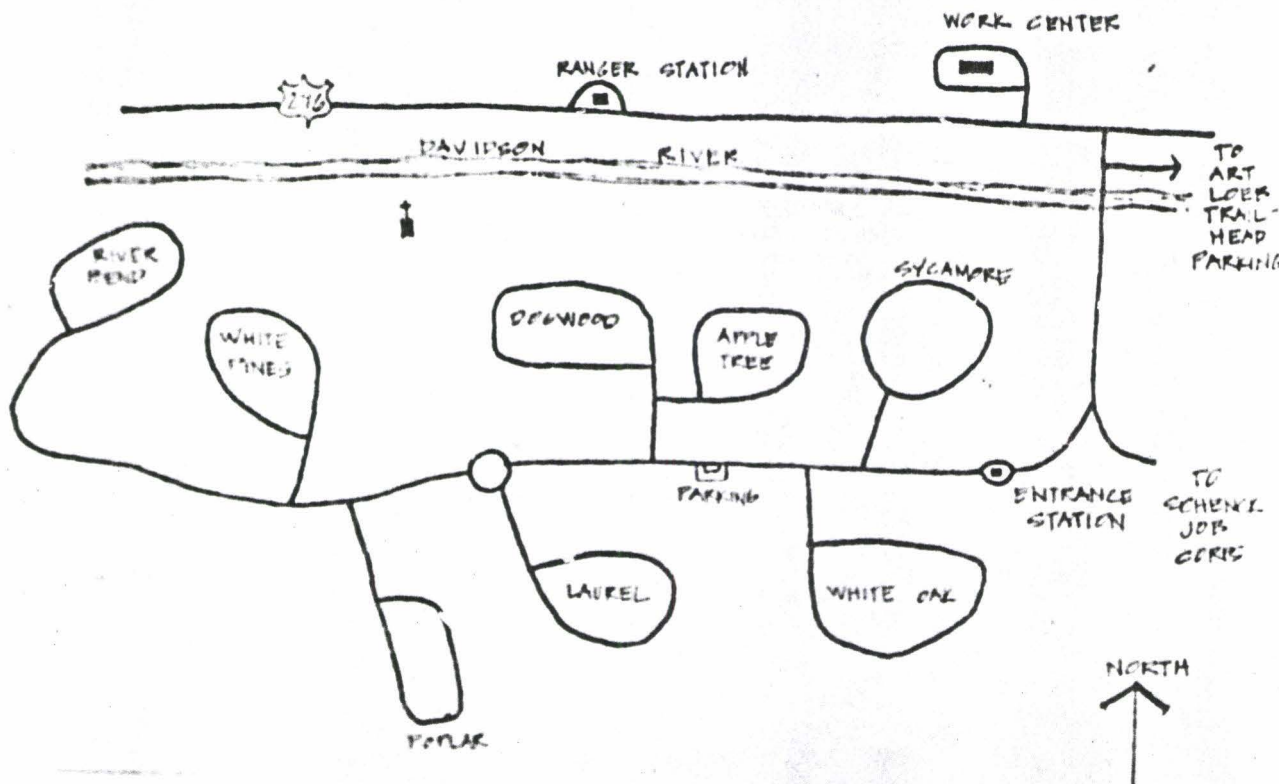
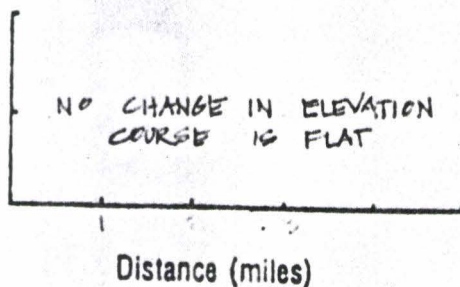
Difficulty:

USGS Map(s):

NARRATIVE

This jogging course utilizes 3 miles of paved roads in the Davidson River Campground. The course is very flat and is completed by running around each of the eight loops in the campground.

Elevation (1000 ft.)





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

TROPHY WATER

LOCATION

The 23 miles in the South Mills River are beautiful trophy waters. The river begins high in the mountains and flows southeast.

ACCESS

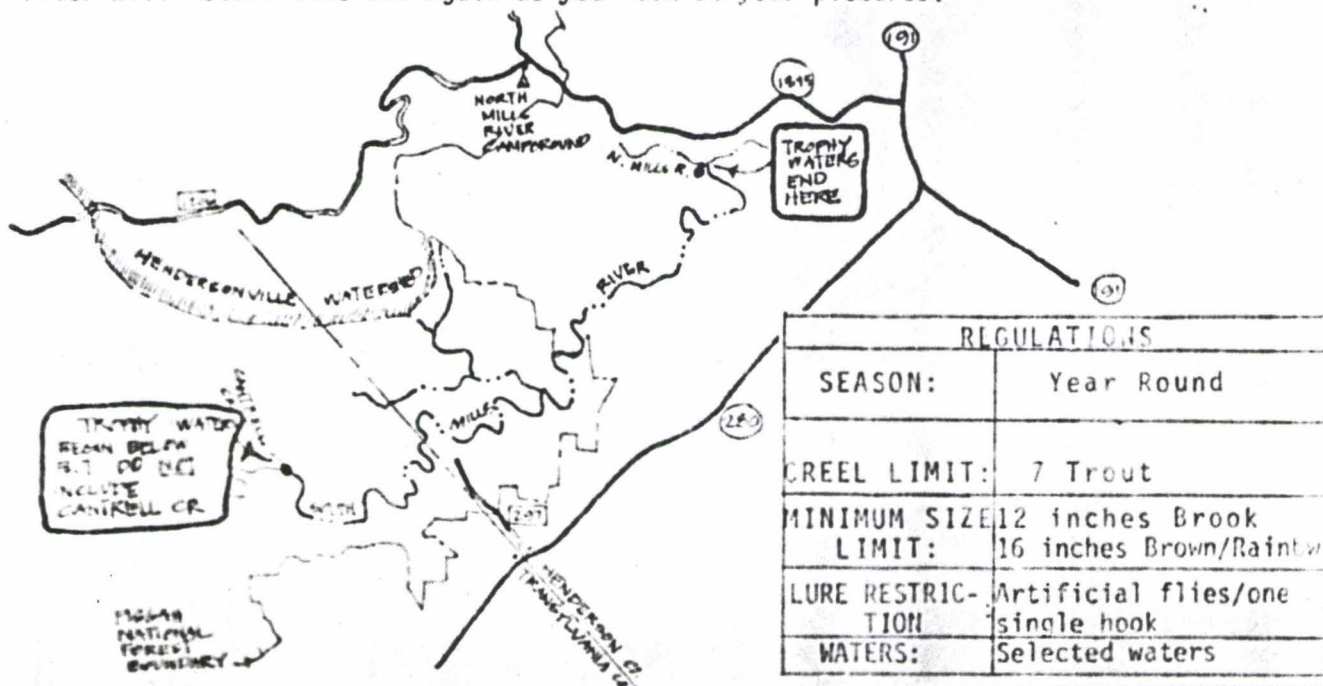
Two trailheads provide access to the area. Turkey Pen is 2 miles off NC 280 at the end of Forest Service Road #297. The other major access is at the trail head near the USGS Gaging Station on Forest Service Road #476. You can locate the parking area by following Yellow Gap Road (Forest Service Road #1206) 3½ miles from US 276. Then turn on to Forest Service #476 1.8 miles to the end.

CONSIDERATIONS AND ATTRACTIONS

This is a remote but very picturesque river. Some of the better fishing spots require a long hike. However, it is this quality that has helped preserve the quality of experience you will find.

The good trail network will also provide a prime opportunity to combine a back pack camping trip with fishing. The main South Mills Trail follows the river with numerous side trails for that needed break in fishing action.

Be sure to take your camera. A picture of that trophy trout will erase any doubt of the size as time passes. You will find many other notable attractions in water falls, hanging limbs over the river, or the peaceful atmosphere where the Cantrell Creek Lodge once stood. Fond memories about that camp along the river will return time and again as you look at your pictures.



Fishing



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

COMMERCIAL CATCH PONDS

Sometimes even the most skilled trout fisherman has a bad day in the streams on National Forest. Who knows why, maybe it was just Tuesday and the fish only bite on every other Monday. Most fisherman generally have at least one reason handy to tell their wife, even if its about the big one that got away.

Just in case this is the situation, or if you happen to develop an intense taste for fresh fish and have a little extra time, trout ponds in this area can solve the problem:

NAME: Meadowbrook Trout Lake

LOCATION: Follow US 64 toward Hendersonville, look for the roadside sign the communities of Etowah and Horseshoe. Meadowbrook is approximately 5 miles south on Cummings Road.

FISH: Rainbow and Brook
\$1.90 per pound for everything you catch
No license necessary
Equipment available if yours is at home
2 lakes open--year round

HOURS: 7:00 am to 8:00 pm (Summertime hours)

OTHER ATTRACTIONS: Picnic tables and open fields are free for your use. You can cook and enjoy the fish there after you catch them. The children can play while Dad catches his "limit".

OPERATOR: Junior Stamey
Telephone: 692-8790

NAME: North Fork Trout Lake

LOCATION: These lakes are approximately 9 miles from Rosman on NC 215 north. Look for the roadside sign ½ mile before the mountain community of Balsam Grove.

FISH: Rainbow and Brook
\$1.70 per pound for everything you catch
No license required
Equipment available if you forget yours
Open year round

HOURS: 7:00 am to 8:00 pm (Summer hours)

OWNER/OPERATOR: Carter McCall
Telephone: 655-2911

Four-Wheel Drive



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

ROAD BEGINNING(3240 feet, 972 meters)

North in Gloucester Gap at the intersection of Catheys Creek Road(471) and Davidson River Road(475)

PILOT MOUNTAIN ROAD FOR 229

Length: 4 mi. (6.4 km.)

ROAD ENDING(4200 feet, 1260 meters)

This section intersects Panther Branch Road (140) below Farlow Gap.

Recommended season:

| Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
|--------|--------|------|--------|
| ← | | → | |

Use: Medium

Difficulty: Easy

USGS Map(s) Shining Rock

ACCESS

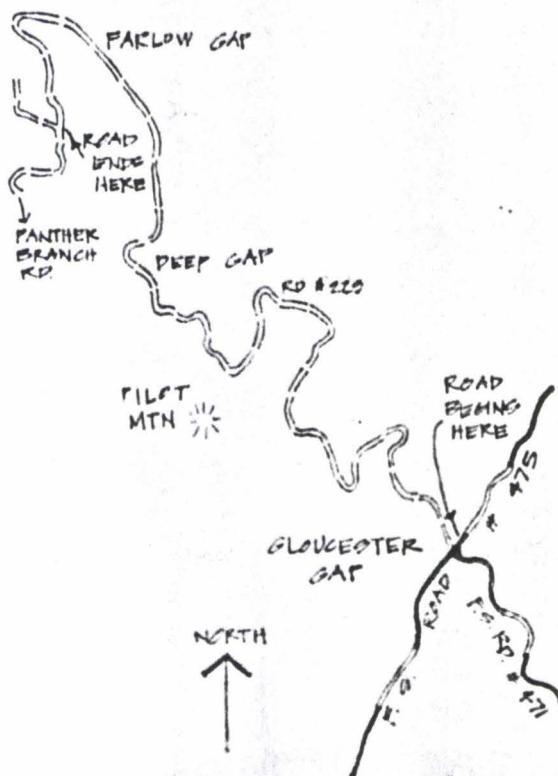
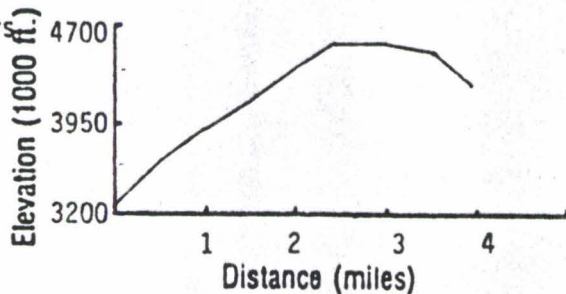
This road is accessible by several different routes. Davidson River (475) from either end on U.S. 276 or N.C. 215 will lead to the entrance as will Catheys Creek Road (471) which fronts on U.S. 64. The Catheys Creek route has more gravel road and will require more time to reach the beginning point. However, the travel through National Forest is an enjoyable experience.

CONSIDERATIONS AND ATTRACTIONS

Pilot Mountain Lookout Tower once stood watch over the forest with this road as the means of access. Driving this road during wet weather is discouraged due to increased possibility for resource damage. Damage is also very likely during the freezing and thawing weather of winter.

This is one road of a system into some magnificent forests. One will drive through areas of timber management where a new forest is beginning. Steep ridges and rugged mountains make this a most enjoyable area to take your family.

With only a little bit of imagination one can see Chief Kiese watching your progress from behind one of the big oaks. According to legend, Chief Kiese is buried somewhere just over the ridge into the next drainage. The area is rich in local history from the chief to early day logging and fire towers.



This road and all the others in this one system are based on old trails and logging roads. Generally the grade is gentle with only an occasional short, steep section. However, the roads are not recommended for two wheel drive vehicles.

A tent, a sleeping bag, and food are all that would be required to convert the serenity of the forest to an overnight stopping point. Remember to be cautious with fire and leave the site so clean that even Chief Kiese would not know you had been there.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

WILDFLOWERS

Many varieties of wildflowers abound on the Pisgah Ranger District and the Pisgah National Forest. This makes activities involving wildflowers some of the most popular recreation opportunities here. The sylvan settings, where these flowers are found offer unlimited possibilities to the photographer. Their location alongside our hiking trails have thrilled many hikers and many folks have marveled at a waterfall backed by a mass of rhododendron in bloom.

On the following lists, many wildflowers species have been named. While not all wildflowers found in the National Forest are listed here, the ones that are listed are some of the most common or the most popular.

For those wishing extra reference materials, a "Wildflower Calendar for the Pisgah Ranger District" has been developed and is available for reference at the Visitor Center Desk at the Pisgah Ranger Station. In addition to this book, two other books are available for reference and are also for sale. These are: Wildflowers of North Carolina, and Great Smoky Mountain Wildflowers. (See Appendix)

Identification/Gathering



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

SPRING FLOWERING WILDFLOWERS

Fire Pink(*Silene virginica*)-Flowers of hot fire pink, petals are deeply notched and up to 2 inches across. Seen along roadsides at the edge of rich woods.

Fetterbush(*Peris floribunda*)- Also known as Mountain andromeda, has clustered bell shaped flowers. Seen profusely on Blue Ridge Parkway.

Flame Azalea(*Rhododendron calendulaceum*)-Flowers of varying shades of orange or yellow, an inch or more across. Can be seen growing in deciduous forests and on forest margins in the mountains.

Pinkshell Azalea(*Rhododendron vaseyi*)-Bright pink flowers. Native only to North Carolina, these shrubs grow infrequently in bogs and spruce forests at high elevations.

Foam Flower(*Tiarella cordifolia*)-Flowers are 8 to 18 inches tall with heart-shaped leaves, 2 to 4 inches long.

Golden Ragwort(*Senecio aureus*)-Sparse rays and finely cut leaves. Basal leaves heart-shaped, long stemmed. Yellow flower-heads on plants 15 to 25 inches tall.

Honeysuckle

Coral Honeysuckle(*Lonicera sempervirens*)-A twining vine, the united petals form a slender trumpet-shaped flower nearly two inches long. These perennials are native to the southeastern states and grow in clearing and along the margins of deciduous woodlands.

Honeysuckle(*Lonicera japonica*)-This twining, woody vine was introduced long ago from Japan. The flowers, often an inch or more long, are extremely fragrant.

May apple(*Podophyllum peltatum*)-Has circular leaves, 6 to 8 inches in length, with a single waxy flower 1 to 2 inches across. Flowerless stems have a single leaf. Plants are medicinal, but poisonous in too large an amount.

Meadow rue(*Thalictrum revolutum*)-Flower stalks may be as much as 6 feet tall, the many small flowers (about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long) are widely spaced and give a feathery appearance.

Milkweed(*Euphorbia corollata*)-The numerous flowers about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch broad, lack petals but have five showy, white glands that attract pollination. Grows in old fields and clearings.

Mountain Laurel(*Kalmia latifolia*)-The five-fused petals are about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch broad, with the leaves 3 inches in length. Early settlers knew laurel as ivy and rhododendron as laurel.

Identification/Gathering



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Phlox

Moss Pink(*Phlox subulata*)- Semi-evergreen perennial with small, awl-shaped leaves and $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch broad flowers. Native to northeastern U.S.

Phlox(*Phlox amoena*)- 6 to 12 inches tall, flowers $\frac{3}{4}$ inch across, in compact clusters at the ends of the stems. Found in dry woodlands and open banks.

Bloodroot(*Sanguinaria canadensis*)-Large leaves enfold the buds protecting them from the cold. The pure white flowers grow to height of 6 to 12 inches. The name refers to the red juice, mostly in the root, used by the Indians and pioneers for dye for clothing and baskets.

Bluets(*Houstonia caerulea*)-Bluer than the sky, delicate; grow in clumps, 1 to 3" tall. Seen most everywhere

Mountain Cinquefoil(*Potentilla canadensis*)-Low plant, flowers solitary similar to a wild strawberry except for flower color, $\frac{1}{3}$ inch across. Leaves divided into 3 to 5 leaflets.

Violets

White(*Viola lanceolata*)-Flowers $\frac{1}{2}$ inch across.

Purple(*Viola pedata*) Birdfoot Violet 1 to 2 inches tall

Yellow(*Viola hastata*)-Halberd-leaved (arrow shaped) 1-2 inches wide at base.

Self-heal(*Prunella vulgaris*)-mint family, flowers lilac, 2 lipped, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long.

Oconee Bells(*Shortia galacifolia*)-Bell shaped, 5 petaled flowers are $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long, evergreen leaves resemble galax, Rare plant found growing along stream beds

Swamp Pink(*Helonias bullata*) Stem is 1 to 2 feet tall, very rare plant of mountain swamps.

Indian Paint Brush(*Castilleja coccinea*)-Orange red bracts are more brilliantly colored than the slender inch long flowers. Grows in moist meadows.

Thimbleweed(*Anemone quinquefolia*)-Flowers have white sepals $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long; cup shaped flowers, along woodland borders

Trailing arbutus(*Epigaea repens*)-Woody perennial has small, very fragrant flowers and alternate evergreen leaves, 1 to 2 inches in length.

Blackberry(*Rubus argutus*)-One of the white flowered thorny species, flowers about 1 inch across, abundant at the entrance to Avery Creek Road.

Cross Vine(*Anisostichus copleolata*) A woody vine, with reddish flowers 2 to 3 inches long. Grows in rich woods throughout the southeast.

Ox-Eye Daisy(*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*)-One of the few flowers known to everyone, can be seen near the school house at the Cradle of Forestry.

Identification/Gathering



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Dutchman's Britches(*Dicentra cucullaria*)-A native perennial, primarily found in rich woods and on north slope river banks. Can be seen on Blue Ridge Parkway near Milepost 416.

Iris

Dwarf Iris(*Iris verna*)- Flowering stems are usually only 3 to 4 inches long; the orange band and narrow straight leaves distinguish this species from the crested iris.

Crested Iris(*Iris cristata*)-Native perennial of rich woods, the leaves of these plants may grow a foot in length. The sepals have a ciliate or pubescent crest.

Peteweed(*Phytolacca americana*)-These perennials may reach a height of 6 feet. The tender leaves are excellent when properly cooked. Juice of berries was once used for ink.

Pussy Toes(*Antennaria solitaria*)-Identified by solitary flower head, leaves are 1 to 3 inches long, produce only female flowers on one plant; only male on another

Robin's Plantain(*Erigeron philadelphicus*)-Flower heads are an inch or more across on hairy stem, six to twelve inches long.

Squaw Root(*Conopholis americana*)-Thick yellowish brown stems of this herb are 2 to 6 inches long and often form on large clumps on roots of oak trees.

False Solomon's Seal(*Smilacina racemosa*)-The terminal flower cluster easily distinguishes this species from the true Solomon's Seal. The plume-like flowers can be seen from April to June, with the stems 15 to 25 inches in height.

Solomon's Seal(*Polygonatum biflorum*)- This graceful arching herb has long stems usually reaching 2 to 3 feet in length. Flowers are larger than False Solomon's seal $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inches long.

Correl(*Rumex hastatulus*)- The small flowers are crowded on short branches at top of a stem usually 12 to 36 inches tall. A common weed of old fields with sandy soil.

Trillium

Catesby's Trillium(*Trillium catesbaei*)-Flowers $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches across, pink in color, usually found in deciduous woods and forests.

Nodding Trillium(*Trillium cernuum*)-Flower stalk bent downward. Flower is often hidden under the wide leaves.

Painted Trillium(*Trillium undulatum*)-White flowers with distinct red inverted "V" at the base of each petal.

Wake Robin(*Trillium erectum*)-Purple/Maroon flowers are ill-scented.

Identification/Gathering



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Trout Lily(*Erythronium americanum*)-Dogtooth violet. Nodding yellow flowers with wide mottled leaves. One of the earliest spring flowers.

Venus' Looking-glass(*Specularia perfoliata*)-The stems are 6 to 18 inches tall encircled by heart-shaped leaves. The flowers are $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch broad. Grow along roadsides, blooming from April through June

Wild Strawberry(*Fragaria virginiana*)- White flowers on plants 6 to 7 inches tall, 3 fingered leaves, spread by runners. Delicious fruit ripe in June. Blooms from March to April.